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The Hook UP

Home
AgentCounty
AgentExtension
Editor

A ROUND-ROBIN CIRCUIT LINKING FARM & HOME BROADCASTERS

RECEIVED

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OUR EXPANDING POTENTIAL AUDIENCE

The following excerpt from an article appearing in "Broadcasting" presents figures of great interest and importance to every farm and home broadcaster.

The indicated steady increase in numbers of receiving sets in farm homes offers something of a challenge. Apparently the commercial advertisers recognize this and are out to take advantage of the situation. What are informational and educational broadcasters going to do about it? The figures:

"Further light on the economic side of the rural scene -- from the angle of the rapid increase in rural electrification -- can be found in figures published by McGraw-Hill. During 1936, 6,288,648 farm homes bought 790,000 battery set units, although 14% of these homes, or 897,873, are wired today. Also, 250,000 wind-driven charger units and 25,000 gas-driven charger units (retail value of \$7,000,000) were bought by rural homes last year.

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OUR EXPANDING POTENTIAL AUDIENCE (Continued from page 1)

"Admitting that the percentage of radio-equipped homes among the wired rural homes is not known accurately, just what do these figures mean? This much, at least: That last year 1,065,000 unwired rural homes bought battery, wind-driven charger or gas-driven charger units. This total -- either new or replacement units -- represents approximately 17% of the homes classified as rural by the Census of Agriculture.

"It would seem to follow that as the economic cycle swings upwards on the farm, men, women, and children want to be able to get their favorite radio personalities and programs. One evidence of this is contained in the foregoing statistics.

"A second index (which will affect radio listening and penetration of radio's influence): During 1936, the Rural Electrification Administration lent or earmarked \$42,903,079 for over 38,000 miles of power lines to serve about 140,000 new customers. 'Electrical World' states that by the end of 1937 it may well be that 33% of the farms will be receiving electrical service. Conservative estimates of 1937 expenditures in rural and farm field electrification furnished by this publication are: Private utilities, \$30,000,000 to add 30,000 miles of line; municipal utilities, \$1,700,000 to add 1,700 miles of line; REA, \$3,000,000 to add 3,000 miles of line.

"The estimate of total expenditure for 1937 is \$34,700,000 to add 40,000 miles of line to serve approximately 160,000 additional rural and farm customers.

"The new miles of lines which have been strung during 1936 and which are to be erected during this year will add approximately 30,000 new wired rural

homes to the existing 800,000 wired rural homes. Thus, in two years' time, an expanded market of farm families will provide users of broadcast advertising with new opportunities which they should develop intensively."

KMA TAKES WOI PROGRAMS

According to the Iowa Extensioner, Radio Station KMA at Shenandoah is now using a number of programs from WOI, the Iowa State College station. A one-way wire from Ames was installed in January.

Says the Extensioner: "W. I. Griffith, director of WOI, explains that these broadcasts will be of mutual benefit. KMA will have more program material available and with strength increased to 5000 watts will reach a large territory not now effectively covered by WOI."

Among the programs carried regularly by KMA are the following: market reports, a series of educational talks, music programs, a library program, and a vocational guidance program.

MAINE AGENTS BROADCASTING

Three Kennebec county, Maine, extension agents are broadcasting a weekly 15-minute news program over WRDO, Augusta. The agents, Maine pioneers in regular locally-prepared extension broadcasting, are Wesley Norton, county agent; Miss Evelyn Lyman, home demonstration agent; Clyde Higgins, club agent. WRDO, with good coverage of most of the county, presents the program Mondays at 12:15. Each agent takes the programs once in three weeks.

A SUCCESSFUL REGIONAL BROADCAST

The Tri-State Farm and Home Hour broadcast over WWVA, Wheeling, wound up a successful first six months on March 29.

On the air daily from 12 to 12:15 noon, the Tri-State Farm and Home Hour is designed to serve farm families in parts of West Virginia, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. Cooperating in the preparation and presentation of the programs are the agricultural and home demonstration agents of five West Virginia and four Ohio counties; two regional offices and one demonstration area staff of the Soil Conservation Service; Oglebay Park and Oglebay Institute, Wheeling; the rural committees of the Wheeling Chamber of Commerce; and the vocational agricultural and home economics department of the public schools. Each cooperating agency takes responsibility for about two programs a month, on the average.

Station WWVA and extension workers had been looking forward for several years to inaugurating a farm and home service program, but not until last summer did things shape up to make possible the kind of program desired. The extension agents felt that if the radio work was to be effective it was essential to have one person located at Wheeling who could act as a director and coordinator, and who could be present at the studio much of the time to assist with rehearsals and to serve as master of ceremonies. This need was met last summer when Frank Sanders, assistant recreation specialist for the State Extension Service with headquarters at Oglebay Park, was authorized to take charge of the program. Mr. Sanders had had considerable previous radio experience, in musical presentations, and as an announcer.

The agencies participating in the program also set up a radio committee with W. C. Gist, Brook county (West Virginia) agricultural agent, as chairman. Several meetings were held during the summer, and before the program took the air definite program schedules were mapped out for the first three months.

In December another three-months schedule was drawn up, and again, on March 22, the Extension and Department of Agriculture participants got together at Oglebay Park to plan for the coming three months, and to talk over radio matters. Another meeting at Oglebay Park, which is a central point in the territory, is now being planned for June.

Present at one or more of these conferences have been Walter Patterson, WWVA program director, who has also taken active day-by-day interest in the programs; Morse Salisbury, Chief of Radio Service, U.S.D.A.; G. E. Ferris, in charge of radio for the Ohio Extension Service; Alan Dailey, radio extension specialist, U.S.D.A.; and Walter Schnopp, extension editor, University of West Virginia.

Special entertainment features, as well as information, are usually included in the programs. Much of this entertainment has been furnished by talent from 4-H clubs and from organizations of rural men and women.

The counties represented in the Tri-State Farm and Home Hour and Hancock, Brook, Ohio, Marshall, and Wetzel counties of West Virginia; and Belmont, Jefferson, Monroe, and Harrison counties of Ohio. The Soil Conservation Service cooperates through Region 1 headquarters at Williamsport, Pa.; and Region 3 headquarters at Dayton, O.; and also through the demonstration staff at Moundsville, W. Va., near Wheeling.
